

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 24 and 25 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein in conformity with the requirement to restrict and Applicants' right to file a continuation application. Please also amend claims 1-23 and add new claims 26 and 27 as follows:

1 1. (Currently amended) ~~Stapling~~ A stapling device
2 with ~~at least two or more~~ stapling heads ~~attached to a~~
3 ~~stapling head unit~~ for stapling sheet-like material, ~~in~~
4 ~~particular paper, cardboard or the like,~~ wherein the
5 improvement comprises a staple carriage having at least two
6 or more stapling heads wherein distance between at least two
7 ~~stapling heads can be adjusted relative to each other,~~
8 ~~characterized in that~~ at least one stapling head (4, 5) is
9 ~~movable,~~ adjustable to the other and one drive unit (9, 10,
10 45, 46) is provided for setting the distance between the
11 stapling heads (4, 5) and said two or more stapling heads
12 move longitudinally in substantially synchronous movement
13 with said sheet like material during stapling.

1 2. (Currently amended) ~~Stapling~~ The stapling device
2 according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that at least two~~
3 further comprising two or more clinchers (13, 14) ~~are~~
4 ~~provided~~, wherein at least one clincher (13, 14) is movable,
5 and one drive unit (19, 20, 45, 46) is provided for setting
6 the distance between the clinchers (13, 14).

1 3. (Currently amended) ~~Device~~ The stapling device
2 according to Claim 1 ~~or 2, characterized in that the further~~
3 comprising clinchers wherein said two or more stapling heads
4 (4, 5) and/or clinchers (13, 14) are movably ~~accommodated~~
5 disposed in a guide (8, 17, 18).

1 4. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The
3 stapling device of claim 1 or 2 wherein said drive unit (9,
4 20, 29, 30, 45, 46) ~~for setting the distance between the~~
5 ~~stapling heads (4, 5) and/or clinchers (13, 14) can be~~ is

6 electrically, electronically, pneumatically ~~and/or~~
7 hydraulically actuated.

1 5. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 1 further comprising clinchers (13, 14), and
4 a clincher drive 22 coupled to a drive (12) for a said at
5 least one stapling head (4, 5) ~~is coupled with the drive~~
6 ~~(22) of a clincher (13, 14).~~

1 6. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 1 further comprising two or more clinchers
4 and a linear guide (8, 17, 18) for ~~the~~ said two or more
5 stapling heads ~~and/or~~ said two or more clinchers ~~is designed~~
6 ~~as a linear guide.~~

1 7. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 ~~device of claim 1 further comprising a guide (8) is~~ rigidly
4 joined with ~~the stapling head unit~~ said staple carriage (2).

1 8. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that essentially the~~
3 ~~entire length of the linear guide (8) is~~ The stapling device
4 of claim 7 wherein said guide is a linear guide supported
5 against the stapling head unit said staple carriage (2)
6 along substantially the entire length of said linear guide.

1 9. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 1 further comprising two or more clinchers

4 and wherein said drive unit is a spindle drive (9, 10, 19,
5 20) for setting the distance between the said two or more
6 stapling heads (4, 5) and/or the said two or more clinchers
7 (14, 15) is designed as a spindle drive (9, 10, 19, 20).

1 10. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 1 or 2 further comprising a position sensor
4 ~~is provided for at least one stapling head position and/or~~
5 ~~at least one clincher position.~~

1 11. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 1 or 2 further comprising a reference
4 ~~position is provided for~~ on said at least one stapling head

5 or said at least one clincher, ~~which is to be used as the~~
6 ~~basis for establishing the respective set position.~~

1 12. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 1 or 2 further comprising a position
4 ~~controller is provided.~~

1 13. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 2 further comprising a collision sensor ~~is~~
4 ~~provided to avoid collisions when setting the stapling head~~
5 ~~position and/or clincher position.~~

1 14. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that an additional~~
3 The stapling device of claim 2 further comprising a locking
4 device (34, 35, 36, 37) ~~is provided~~ for said at least one
5 stapling head (4, 5) and/or said at least one clincher.

1 15. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 14 further comprising a drive ~~is provided~~
4 for actuating ~~the~~ said locking device.

1 16. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 15 wherein said drive for actuating the
4 locking device ~~can be~~ is electrically, pneumatically and/or
5 hydraulically actuated.

1 17. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 14 wherein the locking device is ~~designed as~~
4 a clamping device.

1 18. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 17 wherein the clamping device ~~encompasses~~
4 includes a clamping component (29) ~~that is~~ fixed relative to
5 the staple carriage (2).

1 19. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that a movable~~ The

3 stapling device of claim 18 wherein said clamping component
4 (34, 35, 36, 37) is moveable and is connected with the to
5 said at least one stapling head (4, 5) ~~and/or the clincher.~~

1 20. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 3 further comprising clinchers and a
4 clamping device wherein said clamping device is ~~designed~~
5 separate from the guide (8) for moving the stapling heads.

1 21. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 17 wherein said clamping device ~~encompasses~~
4 includes a pressure ~~and/or tension~~ component (34, 35, 36,
5 37) ~~that exerts its~~ for exerting a force perpendicular to
6 the shifting direction of the corresponding said at least
7 one stapling head ~~and/or~~ said at least one clincher.

1 22. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 21 wherein said pressure component for said
4 clamping device is provided by a pressure piston (14, 35,
5 35, 37) is provided as the clamping component.

1 23. (Currently amended) ~~Device according to one of~~
2 ~~the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ The stapling
3 device of claim 15 wherein said drive includes a force
4 transmission device (38, 39) is provided for the clamping
5 drive of the movable clamping component.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)

1 26. (New) A stapling device comprising a staple
2 carriage with two or more stapling heads, said staple
3 carriage having a longitudinal synchronous movement with a
4 transporting unit of a gather-stapler, said staple carriage
5 having a stapling head unit for stapling said sheet-like
6 material wherein the distance between said two or more
7 stapling heads is adjustable relative to each other, and at
8 least one stapling head (4, 5) is moveable and one drive
9 unit (9, 10, 45, 46) is provided for setting the distance
10 between the stapling heads (4, 5).

1 27. (New) A stapling apparatus comprising:
2 (a) a moveable staple carriage;

3 (b) at least two stapling heads adjustable relative to
4 each other having a drive unit for setting the distance
5 between said at least two stapling heads, said at least two
6 stapling heads disposed on said moveable staple carriage;
7 and
8 (c) a linear guide for moving said moveable staple
9 carriage synchronously with material to be stapled.